

REMARKS

The Applicant respectfully requests entry of this preliminary amendment. The Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been added by this Amendment.

The present application was inadvertently filed as a domestic application under 35 U.S.C. §111(a), rather than as the National Phase application under 35 U.S.C. §371. By way of this Preliminary Amendment, the Specification has been amended to claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. §365 of the filing date of the commonly-owned International application PCT/EP00/02839 that was co-pending on the date the present application was filed in the U.S. The Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added by this Preliminary Amendment, and respectfully request its entry.

CONCLUSION

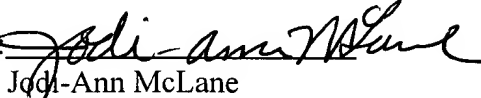
In view of the foregoing remarks, the Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims pending in the above-identified application, namely claims 1-27 are in condition for allowance and a notice to that affect is earnestly solicited.

If the case is found by the Examiner not to be in condition for allowance, then the Applicant hereby requests a telephone or personal interview to facilitate the resolution of any remaining matters. Applicant's attorney may be contact by telephone at the number indicated below to schedule such an interview.

The Patent and Trademark Office is authorized to charge any additional fees incurred as a result of the filing hereof or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 19-0120.

Respectfully submitted,

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